

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2075

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 4 MBFR VIENNA 0184

EXDIS

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DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS DEFENSE

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, NATO
SUBJ: MBFR: BILATERAL CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES
OF APRIL 11, 1977

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: AT SOVIET INVITATION, US REP, DEPREP AND JCS
REP MET WITH SOVIET REPS TARASOV, SHUSTOV AND KAPITONOV ON
APRIL 11. FOR THE MOST PART, DISCUSSION COVERED FAMILIAR GROUND
ON THE WESTERN REDUCTION APPROACH, THE EASTERN FEBRUARY 1976
PROPOSAL, AND DATA EXCHANGE. TOWARDS THE END OF THE DISCUSSION,
TARASOV GAVE DETAILS OF AN APPROACH WHICH HE PRESENTED AS A
PERSONAL IDEA AND AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO CONTINUATION OF THE
PRESENT DATA DISCUSSION. ITS MAIN ELEMENTS WERE: (A) THAT THE
DATA ISSUE WOULD BE LEFT ASIDE; (B) INSTEAD, PARTICIPANTS WOULD
AGREE ON A COMMITMENT TO GO INTO EFFECT AS OF 1 JANUARY 1978
THAT NATO AND THE WARSAW PACT WOULD NOT INCREASE THEIR MILITARY
MANPOWER WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE NAVY OVER THE FIGURES OF
981,000 AND 987,000 RESPECTIVELY, MEN. (C) PARTICIPANTS WOULD
AGREE TO REDUCE FORCES TO 900,000 MEN FOR EACH SIDE BY

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1 JANUARY 1979, WITH A SUB-CEILING FOR GROUND FORCES; (D)
DETAILS OF THE REDUCTION AGREEMENT, INCLUDING VERIFICATION
PROVISIONS, WOULD THEN BE WORKED OUT; (E) IF AGREEMENT ON REDUCTIONS
WERE NOT ACHIEVED BY THE BEGINNING OF 1979, THE FREEZE COMMITMENT
WOULD BE CANCELLED. END SUMMARY

2. AT OUTSET, TARASOV COMMENTED TO US REP THAT HE DID NOT

AGREE WITH FRG CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT'S STATEMENT IN A MARCH 30 PRESS INTERVIEW ON MARCH 30 IN WHICH SCHMIDT HAD LINKED PROGRESS ON NON-FIRST USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS WITH PROGRESS ON AN MBFR FORCE REDUCTION AGREEMENT AND HAD LINKED THE LATTER WITH PROGRESS ON A SALT AGREEMENT. TARASOV BELIEVED THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE TREATED SEPARATELY. IF PROGRESS COULD BE MADE IN THEM, IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO OTHER NEGOTIATIONS.

3. US REP SAID HE HAD RECEIVED SOME BRIEF REPORTS ON THE MOSCOW DISCUSSIONS AS THEY CONCERNED THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS. HE UNDERSTOOD THAT BOTH SIDES HAD EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT PROGRESS SHOULD BE MADE TOWARDS A FORCE REDUCTION AGREEMENT. HE ALSO UNDERSTOOD THAT SOVIET PARTICIPANTS EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE WESTERN POSITION IN THE VIENNA TALKS WAS ONE-SIDED AND AIMED AT UPSETTING THE EXISTING CORRELATION OF FORCES. THIS WAS AN INACCURATE CHARACTERIZATION OF THE WESTERN APPROACH AS IT STOOD AFTER THE WESTERN NUCLEAR WITHDRAWAL PROPOSAL OF DECEMBER 1975. WHEN RELEVANT FACTORS, PARTICULARLY THE GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION, WERE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT, IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE TOTAL PACKAGE OF OBLIGATIONS THE WEST WAS WILLING TO ASSUME WAS AT LEAST AS GREAT AS THE PACKAGE OF OBLIGATIONS WHICH THE WEST WAS ASKING THE EAST TO ASSUME. ANY REALISTIC ASSESSMENT MUST RECOGNIZE THE GREATER BURDEN OF LIMITATIONS WHICH APPLIED TO SUBSTANTIALLY ALL THE ARMED FORCES OF A MAJOR PARTICIPANT AS COMPARED TO THE BURDEN OF MERELY WITHDRAWING FORCES FROM A PARTICULAR AREA AND RETAINING THE UNRESTRICTED RIGHT TO MAINTAIN ANY FORCE SIZE IN ONE'S HOMELAND. REALISTICALLY ASSESSED, THE WESTERN PROPOSAL OFFERED AN EVEN TRADE OF OBLIGATIONS. THUS, IT WOULD NOT CHANGE THE OVERALL BALANCE OF FORCES.

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4. US REP SAID HE WAS DISAPPOINTED EASTERN REPS HAD NOT YET ACTED ON THESE CONSIDERATIONS. THE FACT THAT THE EASTERN FEBRUARY 1976 PROPOSAL HAD MADE NO CHANGE IN OUTCOME AND DID NOT RECOGNIZE THESE FACTS WAS A MAIN REASON WHY THE WEST DID NOT CONSIDER IT A COMMENSURATE RESPONSE TO THE WESTERN DECEMBER 1975 PROPOSAL.

5. TARASOV SAID THE PROVISION IN THE EASTERN FEBRUARY 1976 PROPOSAL PROVIDING FOR US-SOVIET REDUCTIONS FIRST WITH THE OTHERS TO FOLLOW HAD BEEN A MOVE OF REAL SUBSTANCE. LIKE THE US, THE SOVIET UNION HAD TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE VIEWS OF ITS ALLIES IN THE VIENNA TALKS. THESE WARSAW PACT ALLIES HAD INSISTED DURING FORMULATION OF THE ORIGINAL EASTERN POSITION THAT ALL PARTICIPANTS SHOULD REDUCE SIMULTANEOUSLY. THESE ALLIES REGARDED SOVIET FORCES AS THE MAJOR COMPONENT OF WARSAW PACT FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE AND THEY CONSIDERED WEST GERMAN FORCES THE MAIN COMPONENT IN THE NATO FORCES FACING THEM. THEY DID NOT WANT A REDUCTION IN SOVIET FORCES UNLESS THERE WAS GOING TO BE A

SIMULTANEOUS REDUCTION IN FEDERAL GERMAN FORCES. IN THE FEBRUARY 1976 PROPOSAL, THE SOVIETS HAD FINALLY PREVAILED ON THEM TO ACCEPT A CHANGE WHEREBY THE US AND SOVIETS WOULD REDUCE FIRST, BUT IT HAD NOT BEEN EASY TO DO THIS.

6. US REP STRESSED THAT A CHANGE IN THE SEQUENCE OF REDUCTIONS DID NOT REPRESENT A CHANGE IN THE OUTCOME. THE SOVIETS HAD MADE NO CHANGE IN THEIR PROPOSED OUTCOME.

7. US REP SAID IT WAS NECESSARY AND DESIRABLE TO CONTINUE THE DATA DISCUSSION IN THE NEXT ROUND. THE DATA DISCUSSION WOULD HAVE TO CONTINUE UNTIL BOTH SIDES WERE SATISFIED THAT THE ACTUAL FACTS HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED. TARASOV SAID THE WEST MUST HAVE INCLUDED IN ITS ESTIMATES OF WARSAW PACT MILITARY MANPOWER THE PERSONNEL OF EASTERN BORDER GUARDS OR SOME OTHER ORGANIZATION WHICH THE EAST HAD EXCLUDED. WESTERN REPRESENTATIVES HAD ALSO COMMENTED THAT THE WEST HAD CALCULATED SOME OF ITS OWN FIGURES
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ON THE BASIS OF AUTHORIZED STRENGTHS. THUS THE WEST MUST ALSO HAVE USED TABLES OF ORGANIZATION OR AUTHORIZED STRENGTH IN MAKING ITS ESTIMATES OF EASTERN MILITARY MANPOWER.

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 4 MBFR VIENNA 0184

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FROM US REP MBFR

8. UFTPEP SAID THE WEST HAD EXCLUDED BORDER GUARDS AND HAD USED THE ACTUAL STRENGTH METHOD FOR COMPUTING NATO FORCES. WESTERN REPS HAD NOTED THAT, IN SOME CASES IN THE WEST, ACTUAL STRENGTH CORRESPONDED WITH AUTHORIZED STRENGTH, BUT THIS DID NOT MEAN THE WEST HAD USED AUTHORIZED STRENGTH AS THE BASIS EITHER FOR COMPUTING NATO OR WARSAW PACT FORCES. FOR AGREEMENT ON REDUCTIONS, PARTICIPANTS WOULD NEED TO REACH AGREEMENT ON THE ACTUAL MILITARY MANPOWER STRENGTH OF EACH ALLIANCE TO BE USED AS A STARTING POINT FOR COMPUTING REDUCTIONS, THE NUMERICAL AMOUNT OF REDUCTIONS TO BE TAKEN, AND THE NUMERICAL CEILING AT WHICH FORCES WOULD BE HELD FOLLOWING REDUCTIONS. HENCE THE DATA DISCUSSION WOULD HAVE TO CONTINUE UNTIL THERE WAS AGREEMENT ON THE FACTS.

9. US DEPREP SAID THAT IN ADDITION TO THE GEOGRAPHIC FACTS REFERRED TO BY US REP, THERE WERE GREAT DIFFERENCES OF SIZE AND SCALE AMONG PARTICIPANTS. THE SOVIETS WERE CONTINUING TO TREAT ALL PARTICIPANTS AS THOUGH THEY WERE THE SAME SIZE MILITARILY AND THE EQUALS OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET
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UNION. THE FORCES IN THE SOVIET UNION, QUITE ASIDE FROM SOVIET FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE, WERE MUCH LARGER THAN THE TOTAL OF NATO FORCES IN WESTERN EUROPE. THIS DIFFERENCE IN MILITARY STRENGTH AND THE CLOSENESS OF THE USSR TO CENTRAL EUROPE CAUSED APPREHENSION AMONG THE WESTERN EUROPEANS ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF ENTERING INTO A FORCE REDUCTION TREATY WITH THE SOVIET UNION. IT WAS NECESSARY FOR THE SOVIET UNION TO MAKE AN IMPORTANT MOVE IN THESE TALKS WHICH WOULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF MEETING THIS APPREHENSION. ONE USEFUL MOVE WOULD BE FOR THE SOVIETS TO DROP THEIR REQUIREMENT ON THE WESTERN EUROPEANS TO COMMIT THEMSELVES IN A FIRST AGREEMENT TO ARMAMENT REDUCTIONS AND LIMITATIONS.

10. TARASOV SAID HE DID NOT AGREE WITH THESE STATEMENTS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF GEOGRAPHY. THE SOVIET UNION HAD THE LONGEST BORDERS IN THE WORLD. IT WAS BOTH IN EUROPE AND IN ASIA. IT HAD TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE FORCES OF SOME MEMBERS OF NATO AND OF OTHERS FURTHER AWAY. THE FORCES IN THE WEST INCLUDED NOT ONLY NATO FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA BUT THE FORCES OF THE UK, FRANCE, SPAIN, PORTUGAL AND SWEDEN. THERE WERE ALSO US BASES WHICH HAD TO BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION. BESIDES, NEITHER EASTERN EUROPEANS NOR THE SOVIET UNION HAD FORGOTTEN WORLD WAR II AND THE DESTRUCTION IT HAD BROUGHT IN EASTERN EUROPE AND THE SOVIET UNION. THE SOVIET UNION'S ALLIES WERE NOT WORRIED ABOUT THE UNITED STATES BUT ABOUT THE FRG.

11. US DEPREP SAID HE UNDERSTOOD TARASOV WAS SAYING THAT THE EAST WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE FRG. BUT THE WEST EUROPEANS WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION. THERE WAS NO COMPARISON BETWEEN THESE TWO COUNTRIES. THE FRG WAS A MEDIUM-SIZED COUNTRY OF LIMITED MILITARY POTENTIAL AND THE SOVIET UNION ONE OF THE WORLD'S LEADING MILITARY POWERS. THIS WAS WHY THE SOVIETS SHOULD TAKE A MOVE TO MEET THESE NATURAL WESTERN APPREHENSIONS. TARASOV HAD ALREADY TOLD US REPS THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD NOT NECESSARILY INSIST THAT THE WESTERN EUROPEANS UNDERTAKE A COMMITMENT TO REDUCE ARMAMENTS IN A FIRST AGREEMENT. SOVIETS
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SHOULD MAKE THIS POINT CLEAR AND SPECIFIC IN A MORE OFFICIAL FORM.

12. TARASOV INSISTED THAT THE FEBRUARY 1976 EASTERN PROPOSAL HAD BEEN A SUBSTANTIAL ONE. THE EASTERN EUROPEANS WERE NOT PREPARED TO AGREE THAT THE SOVIETS SHOULD REDUCE UNTIL THE WESTERN EUROPEANS HAD GIVEN A CLEAR INDICATION OF THE NUMBER OF MEN (SIC) THEY WOULD REDUCE AND THE TIMING.

13. US REPS SAID WEST HAD INDICATED SCOPE OF REDUCTIONS IT WOULD TAKE TO COMMON CEILING. TARASOV SAID WEST HAD NOT INDICATED TIMING AND HAD ONLY COMMITTED ITSELF TO ENTERING ON PHASE II NEGOTIATIONS. US REP SAID THE EASTERN FEBRUARY 1976 PROPOSAL WAS NOT CLEAR. IT APPEARED TO ENVISAGE COMMITMENTS FROM THE WESTERN EUROPEANS WHICH WOULD AMOUNT TO ACCEPTANCE OF THE EASTERN PROGRAM ON THE REDUCTION OF MILITARY MANPOWER AND ARMAMENTS. THE SOVIETS HAD PERMITTED THIS AMBIGUITY TO CONTINUE AND HAD NOT CLARIFIED IT.

14. TARASOV ASKED US REP WHAT CHANGE THE WEST HAD MADE IN THE WESTERN PROGRAM TO MOVE TOWARDS THE EASTERN PROGRAM. US REP SAID BY ADDING NUCLEARS IN THE DECEMBER 1975 PROPOSAL AND A CEILING ON AIR MANPOWER. TARASOV SAID THIS WAS NOT REALLY A MOVE TOWARD THE EASTERN POSITION. IN ADDITION TO REQUIRING ASYMETRICAL EASTERN GROUND FORCE REDUCTIONS, THE EAST WOULD BE EXPECTED TO REDUCE ITS AIR MANPOWER WHILE THE WEST COULD EVEN INCREASE ITS AIR MANPOWER.

15. US REP RETURNED TO THE DATA ISSUE. TARASOV PRESSED FOR TABLING OF NATIONAL DATA. US REP REPEATED THE WESTERN PROPOSAL TO TABLE US AND SOVIET FIGURES. TARASOV ASKED US REPS FOR THE CURRENT WESTERN ESTIMATE OF SOVIET MILITARY MANPOWER IN THE REDUCTION AREA. IN RETURN, US REPS ASKED TARASOV FOR CURRENT SOVIET FIGURES ON US FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA. TARASOV SAID SOVIET FIGURES ON SOVIET GROUND FORCES IN THE AREA WERE NOT FAR BELOW THE 460,000 FIGURE THE WEST HAD TABLED IN 1973. SOVIET ESTIMATES ON US FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA DID NOT DIVERGE
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WIDELY FROM THE 193,000 FIGURE THE WEST HAD TABLED IN 1973. THIS AGAIN DEMONSTRATED THAT TABLING US AND SOVIET FIGURES WOULD NOT HELP IDENTIFY THE SOURCES OF THE DISCREPANCY SINCE THE DISCREPANCY APPEARED TO BE LOCATED ELSEWHERE. THEREFORE, NATIONAL FIGURES SHOULD BE TABLED. THE EAST HAD STATED THAT THE TABLING OF FIGURES WOULD BE ENTIRELY SEPARATE FROM THE REDUCTION PROGRAMS OF BOTH SIDES AND WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO THOSE PROGRAMS. SOME WESTERN REPRESENTATIVES HAD POINTED OUT WESTERN FIGURES WERE PUBLISHED, WHEREAS EASTERN FIGURES WERE SECRET ONES. THIS WAS ALL THE MORE REASON WHY THE WEST SHOULD AGREE TO TABLE NATIONAL FIGURES.

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FROM US REP MBFR

16. SHUSTOV SAID WESTERN REPS HAD SAID THAT THEY COULD NOT CHANGE WESTERN ESTIMATES ON WARSAW PACT FORCES UNLESS THE EAST PRODUCED CONVINCING EVIDENCE THAT THESE ESTIMATES WERE INCORRECT. WHAT CONVINCING EVIDENCE WAS THE EAST EXPECTED TO PRODUCE? US REPS SAID THE EAST WAS NOT EXPECTED TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO PRODUCE EVIDENCE. RATHER, WESTERN REPS WOULD

CONTINUE QUESTIONS ABOUT EASTERN DATA AND THEY WOULD EVALUATE EASTERN REPLIES AS TO THEIR PLAUSIBILITY.

17. SHUSTOV SAID HE DID NOT SEE THIS PROCESS LEADING TO ANY CHANGE IN WESTERN ESTIMATES. US REP SAID THIS WOULD BE UP TO THE EAST IN TERMS OF WHAT REPLIES IT GAVE TO WESTERN QUESTIONS. HOWEVER, US REPS DID NOT EXPECT THAT EVIDENCE THE EAST WOULD PRODUCE WOULD LEAD TO MORE THAN MINOR CHANGES IN WESTERN DATA. TARASOV SAID THE EAST WOULD CONTINUE TO ANSWER WESTERN QUESTIONS ON DATA AS IT HAD UP TO NOW. BUT THIS PROCESS COULD TAKE YEARS AND HE SAW NO PROSPECT IT WOULD EVER LEAD TO AGREEMENT.

18. US REP SAID HE HAD BEEN PUZZLED BY SOME COMMENTS MADE BY
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COLONEL KAPITONOV TO GENERAL SURUT AND MR. CLARKE ON APRIL 6. WHAT COLONEL KAPITONOV APPARENTLY HAD IN MIND WAS THE POSSIBILITY OF AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE THAT (A) EACH SIDE WOULD FREEZE ITS MILITARY MANPOWER AT THEIR CURRENT LEVELS; (B) EACH SIDE WOULD REDUCE THEIR MILITARY MANPOWER TO AN OVERALL CEILING OF 900,000 MEN WITH A SUBCEILING FOR GROUND FORCE MANPOWER OF EITHER 700,000 OR 750,000 MEN BY 1979; AND (C) EACH SIDE WOULD DECIDE FOR ITSELF ON THE ALLOCATION OF REDUCTIONS WITHIN ITS MILITARY GROUPING.

19. US REP ASKED WHETHER THESE HAD BEEN PURELY PERSONAL IDEAS OF COLONEL KAPITONOV OR WHETHER THEY REPRESENTED THE VIEWS OF TARASOV AND HIS DELEGATION. TARASOV SAID THESE WERE HIS OWN PERSONAL VIEWS WHICH HE WAS NOW CONSIDERING. HE INTENDED TO REPORT THEM TO SOVIET AUTHORITIES ON HIS RETURN TO MOSCOW AT THE END OF THE ROUND. HIS CONCEPT WAS AS FOLLOWS: THE DATA DISCUSSION WOULD BE PUT ASIDE. PARTICIPANTS WOULD ENTER A COMMITMENT THAT, AS OF 1 JANUARY 1978, OR SOME OTHER DATE WITHIN 1978 TO BE AGREED, THE NATO PARTICIPANTS WOULD NOT INCREASE THE TOTAL OF THEIR MILITARY MANPOWER IN THE REDUCTION AREA ABOVE THE FIGURE OF 981,000 MEN AND THE WARSAW PACT PARTICIPANTS WOULD COMMIT THEMSELVES NOT TO INCREASE THEIR TOTAL MILITARY MANPOWER ABOVE 987,000 MEN. THEY WOULD ALSO AGREE THAT, AS OF 1 JANUARY 1979 OR SOME DATE TO BE SPECIFIED, THE NATO AND WARSAW PACT PARTICIPANTS WOULD REDUCE THEIR FORCES TO A FIGURE OF 900,000 FOR EACH SIDE WITH A SUBCEILING FOR GROUND FORCES. THEY WOULD ALSO AGREE ON CONFIDENCE BUILDING AND VERIFICATION MEASURES WHICH WOULD ASSURE EACH SIDE THAT THE OTHER WAS NOT MAINTAINING OVER 900,000 MEN IN THE AREA OF REDUCTIONS.

20. US REP ASKED HOW ARMAMENT REDUCTIONS WOULD BE HANDLED UNDER THIS APPROACH AND WHAT WOULD BE DONE ABOUT US-SOVIET REDUCTIONS AND WESTERN EUROPEAN REDUCTIONS. TARASOV SAID THE SPECIFICS OF THE REDUCTION AGREEMENT WOULD BE OPEN FOR NEGOTIATION. BUT HE

COULD SAY AS REGARDS ARMAMENTS THAT IT DID NOT SEEM POSSIBLE TO
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AGREE TO USE PRESENT LEVELS OF ARMAMENTS AS A BASIS OF REDUCTIONS. HE ADDED THAT ONE MIGHT TRY TO NEGOTIATE SOME KIND OF ARMAMENT REDUCTIONS PACKAGE, BUT HE DID NOT KNOW HOW MOSCOW WOULD FEEL ABOUT THIS. BUT ALL PARTICIPANTS WOULD HAVE TO TAKE THE SAME COMMITMENTS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE EAST CONSIDERED THAT REDUCTIONS BY UNITS WAS PREFERABLE BY FAR. IT HAD MORE MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE AND IT WAS MORE EASILY VERIFIED. BUT THE WEST DID NOT WANT TO AGREE TO THIS. THE EAST COULD NOT FORCE THE WEST TO AGREE VOLUNTARILY TO THIS EASTERN CONCEPT, OR TO OTHER EASTERN CONCEPTS. AGREEMENT HAD TO BE VOLUNTARY. THE WEST WANTED TO REDUCE BY INDIVIDUALS. IN ANY EVENT, THE SAME STANDARDS HAD TO APPLY TO ALL PARTICIPANTS, ONE WAY OR THE OTHER. IT WAS THE SAME WITH MANPOWER CEILINGS. THE WEST WANTED A COLLECTIVE CEILING FOR THE GERMANS WHICH WOULD ALLOW THEM TO INCREASE, BUT WANTED TO IMPOSE A NATIONAL CEILING ON THE SOVIETS. BUT THE SAME KIND OF CEILING WOULD HAVE TO APPLY TO EVERYBODY. AND THE METHOD OF REDUCTION WOULD HAVE TO BE THE SAME FOR BOTH SIDES. THE SOVIETS WOULD NOT AGREE TO WITHDRAW A TANK ARMY WHEN THE WEST WAS INSISTING ON THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE ITS OWN METHOD OF REDUCTIONS. TARASOV SAID IN REPLY TO A QUESTION THAT THE FIGURES HE HAD SUGGESTED FOR THE WESTERN NO INCREASE COMMITMENT AND POST-REDUCTION CEILING INCLUDED THE FRENCH. NO ONE IN MOSCOW WOULD UNDERSTAND IT IF THE FRENCH WERE LEFT OUT OF AGREED UPPER LIMITS.

21. US REP SAID THIS PROPOSAL WOULD APPEAR TO BE TANTAMOUNT TO ASKING THE WEST TO ACCEPT THE FIGURES WHICH THE EAST HAD PROVIDED ON ITS OWN FORCES. BUT TARASOV KNEW THAT THERE WAS A LARGE DISCREPANCY OF MORE THAN 150,000 MEN BETWEEN EASTERN AND WESTERN FIGURES ON WARSAW PACT FORCES. WHAT SHOULD WESTERN NEGOTIATORS TELL THEIR PARLIAMENTS AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS HAD HAPPENED WITH THESE 150,000 MEN? TARASOV SAID WESTERN NEGOTIATORS SHOULD TELL THEIR PARLIAMENTS THAT THIS WAS A PROBLEM FOR THE EAST. AS HE HAD SUGGESTED, PARTICIPANTS SHOULD PUT THE DATA ISSUE ASIDE. THE ONLY COMMITMENTS THEY WOULD BE UNDERTAKING WOULD BE NOT TO EXCEED THE STATED FIGURE AND TO REDUCE THEIR FORCES TO THE SPECIFIED TOTALS. IF PARTICIPANTS FAILED TO REACH
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AGREEMENT ON SPECIFICS OF REDUCTIONS, THE COMMITMENT NOT TO INCREASE FORCES OVER A SPECIFIC AMOUNT WOULD BECOME NULL AND VOID. THE AGREED VERIFICATION PROCEDURES, WHICH WOULD GO INTO EFFECT AT THE SAME TIME A REDUCTION AGREEMENT WENT INTO EFFECT, WOULD GIVE EACH SIDE ASSURANCE THAT THE OTHER DID NOT HAVE MORE THAN

900,000 MEN IN THE AREA.

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FROM US REP MBFR

22. US REP ASKED TARASOV WHETHER HE WAS SUGGESTING THAT THE EAST MIGHT REDUCE ITS FORCES PRIOR TO THE COMING INTO EFFECT OF THE FREEZE UNTIL THEY REACHED THE SUGGESTED FIGURE OF 987,000. TARASOV SAID EASTERN FIGURES WERE OFFICIAL AND ACCURATE. HE SAID THE EAST HAD A SIMILAR PROBLEM WITH THE WESTERN TOTAL ON NATO DIRECT PARTICIPANTS. THIS TOTAL WAS LOWER THAN THE EASTERN ESTIMATE OF TOTAL WESTERN FORCES IN THE AREA. EASTERN NEGOTIATORS WOULD TELL THEIR AUTHORITIES THIS FACT. BUT THEY WOULD ALSO TELL THEM THAT THE WEST WAS UNDERTAKING THAT, AS OF 1 JANUARY 1978, IT WOULD HAVE NO MORE THAN 981,000 MEN IN THE AREA. WHAT THE WEST DID BETWEEN THE PRESENT AND THAT POINT WAS ITS OWN AFFAIR. IN REPLY TO FURTHER QUESTIONS, TARASOV SAID THAT THE COMMITMENT NOT TO INCREASE FORCES OVER A SPECIFIED NUMBER WOULD NOT BE VERIFIED, BUT COMPLIANCE WITH THE REDUCTION AGREEMENT WOULD BE. HE STATED THAT HE HAD NO SPECIFIC IDEAS ON VERIFICATION IN MIND. THESE WOULD HAVE TO BE DEVELOPED LATER. BUT US REPS COULD BE QUITE SURE THAT THE EAST WAS JUST AS INTERESTED IN VERIFICATION AS THEY WERE.

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23. US REP SAID HE FORESAW CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY WITH THIS CONCEPT. IT APPEARED TO ASK THE WEST TO IGNORE THE FIGURES WHICH IT CONSIDERED TO BE CORRECT AND SIMPLY TO ACCEPT THE EASTERN FIGURES WHICH HAD BEEN TABLED. THIS DID NOT APPEAR FEASIBLE. IT WOULD BE A FAR BETTER APPROACH TO CONTINUE WITH THE DATA DISCUSSION AS IT HAD BEEN CONDUCTED THUS FAR AND TO ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY THE SOURCES OF THE DISCREPANCY, AND TO LOCATE ITS DISTRIBUTION AMONG EASTERN FORCES. TARASOV SAID HE HAD SAID AT THE OUTSET THAT THE EAST WAS PREPARED TO CONTINUE WITH THE DATA DISCUSSIONS. HE MERELY DID NOT THINK IT WOULD LEAD ANYWHERE. THERE WERE TOO MANY VESTED INTERESTS IN THE WEST IN PRESENT WESTERN DATA. WESTERN INTELLIGENCE EXPERTS WOULD NOT

WISH TO INCUR THE BLAME OF ERROR. WESTERN MILITARY BUDGETS DEPENDED ON MAINTENANCE OF PRESENT FIGURES. US REP SAID THAT THERE WOULD BE PLENTY OF SOVIET TROOPS LEFT IN THE REDUCTION AREA TO JUSTIFY WESTERN BUDGET REQUESTS.

24. US REP ASKED TARASOV WHETHER HE INTENDED TO RAISE THIS PROPOSAL WITH OTHER WESTERN DELEGATIONS DURING THE REMAINDER OF THE ROUND. TARASOV REPLIED THAT WHAT HE HAD BEEN DESCRIBING WERE PERSONAL IDEAS. THE GENESIS OF HIS CONCEPT HAD BEEN HIS REFLECTION ON THE FACTS THAT (A) THE EAST HAD ORIGINALLY PROPOSED A FREEZE, (B) BOTH SIDES HAD SINCE THEN TABLED UPDATED FIGURES, (C) GENERAL SECRETARY BREZHNEV HAD AGAIN PUBLICLY PROPOSED A FREEZE. HE, TARASOV, HAD DISCUSSED THIS CONCEPT WITH A FEW WARSAW PACT DELEGATIONS BUT NOT ALL. HE HAD DESCRIBED HIS IDEA TO US REP BECAUSE MOSCOW WOULD WANT TO KNOW PRELIMINARY US REACTION. US REP SAID THAT, UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT WOULD BE BETTER TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY ON THESE IDEAS. TARASOV AGREED.

25. COMMENT: WE EXPECT TO HEAR MORE OF TARASOV'S NEW CONCEPT IN THE NEXT ROUND. GROMYKO MAY BRING IT UP WITH SECRETARY VANCE IN MAY. ALTHOUGH DETAILS WERE NOT ARTICULATED ON THIS OCCASION, IF TARASOV'S PRINCIPLE OF DOING ONLY WHAT THE WESTERN EUROPEANS

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ARE WILLING TO DO, BUT APPLYING THIS EQUALLY TO BOTH SIDES IS APPLIED SYSTEMATICALLY, THE SOVIETS MAY IN COURSE STATE THAT (A) THEY ARE WILLING TO AGREE TO A COMMON CEILING AT 900,000 MEN, (B) REDUCTIONS AND CEILINGS WILL BE COLLECTIVE, (C) REDUCTIONS MAY BE BY THIN-OUT, (D) THERE WILL BE NO REDUCTION OR LIMITATION OF ARMAMENTS, AND (E) NO SUBCEILING ON THE SOVIETS AND NO WITHDRAWAL OF A SOVIET TANK ARMY. ACCOMPANIED BY AN EXPLANATION THAT THE SOVIETS HAD SHOWN GREAT PATIENCE

IN DISCUSSION OF DATA AND BY CRITICISM OF WESTERN REFUSAL TO TABLE NATIONAL TOTALS, THIS APPROACH COULD HAVE SOME PUBLIC IMPACT. THIS POSSIBLE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES AN ADDITIONAL REASON TO PROCEED WITH THE TABLING OF NATIONAL TOTALS, TO ASCERTAIN THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN WESTERN AND EASTERN FIGURES ON WARSAW PACT FORCES, AND THEN TO FOCUS ENQUIRY ON AREAS OF GREATEST DISCREPANCY.

26. ON APRIL 12, US REP BRIEFED AD HOC GROUP ON PARAS ABOVE. HE DID NOT, REPEAT NOT, BRIEF GROUP ON PARAS 18-25, DESCRIBING TARASOV'S NEW CONCEPT. RESOR

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MBFRV00184
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770126-0975
Format: TEL
From: MBFR VIENNA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770466/aaaacfk.tel
Line Count: 561
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c445bda6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NOFORN, EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 11
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NOFORN, EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2833637
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MBFR: BILATERAL CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES OF APRIL 11, 1977
TAGS: PARM, UR, US, NATO, MBFR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c445bda6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
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